



**Reading beyond words:  
Approaches to multimodality in the media**

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## **Reporting violence: Personalization and impersonalization in picture cuts**

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Recent decades have seen an increasing interest in the analysis of multimodal environment from a variety of perspectives including Critical Discourse Analysis focusing on the ideology behind the selection of the images and focus by media. Of interest are images supplementing articles reporting different forms of violence, since media tends to foreshadow the actual event and avoid distressful images. The images that are presented instead are suggestive of visual metaphors and metonymies that map the event onto a certain symbolic element, such as ruins or pictures of terrorist leaders. I argue that the salience of such images relies on the strategies of impersonalization and personalization that conceal certain issues but highlight others. The choice of the cuts is also dependent on the newsworthiness of the event reported and newspaper style.

**Keywords:** Violence, mass media, critical discourse analysis, personalization, impersonalization